

May 22, 2007

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT

The Personnel Committee met Tuesday, May 22, 2007 at 2:00 p.m., in the QC Meeting Room, Third Floor, County Administration Building, 215 East Central, Bentonville

Committee Members Present: Hill, Hobbs, Schindler, Stephenson, Winscott, Wolf

Others Present: Barbara Ludwig, Richard McComas, Travis Harp

Media: Jennifer Turner – Benton County Daily Record
Scarlett Simms – Morning News

1. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Review of Current Salary Administration Policy/Procedures

The committee discussed a change made at the previous Personnel Committee meeting concerning Elected Official's pay increases. Barbara Ludwig stated that the JESAP Committee suggested added language spelling out that cost of living increases for Elected Officials will be considered in the even-numbered years when salary increases are not be considered. JP Stephenson asked to include Justices of the Peace in the language, and stated that his intent is to avoid the impression that Elected Officials will receive automatic pay raises and that they are voting themselves pay raises. There was discussion concerning when they should begin considering pay increases for Elected Officials and Justices of the Peace. Comptroller Richard McComas suggested reviewing them in 2008 in order for the salaries to be in effect for the entire 2009-2010 term.

Barbara Ludwig stated that the next step will be to forward the revised Employee Policy Manual to the Committee of 13, and that they will need to request ordinances changing the Code of Ordinances to reflect the changes in the language. JP Wolf made motion to forward an ordinance request to the Committee of 13 to make the revisions in the Employee Policy Manual and Salary Administration Policy, seconded by JP Hill. Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

Barbara Ludwig stated that a bill is currently being considered in Congress to grant up to 14 days paid leave for workers called up for emergency duty, and is being requested by the Department of Homeland Security.

JP Schindler stated that he would like the committee to consider proposing a change in the makeup of Benton County's Elected Offices by abandoning the office of Coroner, and making it an appointed position. He said they should consult with the County Judge, and he believed it

would have to be placed on a ballot and voted on by the people. He said that the advantage would be that the Coroner will be under the direction of someone besides themselves, and that it needs to be someone with a medical background. He said he is not just considering the current situation, but feels that the public has not been served well for the past 4 or 5 years. JP Wolf stated that it might be difficult to find someone with a medical background who would apply for the position at its current salary. JP Schindler stated that it would not have to be a physician, but could be a corpsman from the military. The committee discussed the makeup of other county governments. Assistant County Administrator Travis Harp pointed out that some offices are combined in counties with much smaller populations than Benton County's. JP Stephenson stated that this is something that they would want to look into quite extensively before taking any action.

Barbara Ludwig stated that the next meeting will have a full agenda due to the number of new personnel requests, and the committee will prioritize the requests before forwarding them to the Finance Committee.

JP Stephenson announced that the next Personnel Committee meeting will be Monday, June 11, 2007 at 2:00 p.m.

After motion and second the meeting adjourned at 3:07 p.m.